

them. But I never shall forget Constable's conversation. It was only about Abbotsford and the Waverley Novels. He informed me, that he intended to build a new wing to Abbotsford next year, and you would have supposed from what he said that Sir Walter had only commenced developing a new Eldorado. I never in my life met such a braggart, or a man so full of self-importance. Something had gone, wrong on the journey; the guard or the coachman had displeased. He went into an ecstasy of pompous passion. 'Do you know who I am, man? I am Archibald Constable/ &c., &c., &c. This man was on the point of a most fatal and shattering bankruptcy; had gone up to town with some desperate resolve; and in less than a week the crash came. When he had exhausted Abbotsford and the Waverley Novels, he began bragging about the *Edinburgh Review*; and dilated much on an article on Milton. I, like a youth, repeating at second-hand, ventured to observe, that no one wrote on poetry like Jeffrey. I copied this from Lockhart, but I natter myself, that if I had read the article, I should not have made the observation; for it always afterwards gave me a very low opinion of Lockhart's literary discrimination. No man with a good nose could have for an instant supposed that Jeffrey had written the article in question. Constable informed me, that it was not by Jeffrey but that it was a secret: but so little was his power of reserve and reticence, or so great the excitement under which he then laboured, that before long I had no difficulty in worming out from him, that it was by a young lawyer of the name of Macaulay, from whom he expected great things. Therefore, I arrived in London with a sort of literary secret.